

Amend th claims to read as follows.

- Sub 7
B8*
1. (amended) A method for forming a gate dielectric for an integrated circuit device, the method comprising:

forming an initial oxynitride layer upon a substrate material, said initial oxynitride layer having an initial thickness; and

subjecting said initial oxynitride layer to a plasma nitridation, said plasma nitridation resulting in final oxynitride layer, said final oxynitride layer having a final thickness, wherein said final oxynitride layer has an equivalent oxide thickness of less than 15 angstroms and a nitrogen concentration of at least 2.0×10^{15} atoms/cm².

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2. (amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said final thickness exceeds said initial thickness by less than 5 angstroms.

3. (amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said final thickness is less than 20 angstroms.

REMARKS

This Amendment has been revised in light of the Office Action mailed February 28, 2002. Claims 1-3 and 6-8 are presented for examination. Claims 4, 5 and 9-13 have been canceled without prejudice. Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of Claims 4 and 5, and Claims 2 and 3 also have been amended. Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(c)(1), a marked up version of the amended claims is presented in an appendix to this Amendment.

Election/Restrictions

Election of one of the following two groups of claims is required: (I) Claims 1-8 drawn to a method; and (II) Claims 9-13 drawn to a device. Applicants hereby affirm the